The Bishop of *CHESTER*'s

SERMON

At St. *Bridget*'s Church,

On *EASTER-MONDAY*, April 6. 1713.

Hoare Mayor.

Martis xiv. *die Aprilis* 1713. *Annoq; R. Reginæ* ANNÆ, *Magnæ Britanniæ*, &c. *Undecimo.*

IT is Ordered, That the Thanks of this Court be given to the Right Reverend Father in God, *William* Lord Biſhop of *Cheſter*, for his Sermon Preach'd before this Court and the Governors of the ſeveral Hoſpitals of this City, at the Pariſh-Church of St. *Bridget*, on *Monday* in *Eaſter-Week* laſt, and that he be deſired to Print the ſame.

GIBSON.

Dawes (Sir W.), Baronet. Successively Bishop of Chester and Archbishop of York

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693. f. 10. 4

A SERMON

Preach'd before the Right Honourable the

LORD-MAYOR,

THE

ALDERMEN, SHERIFFS,

AND

Governors of the ſeveral Hoſpitals of the City of *London*,,

In St. *BRIDGET*'s-Church,

ON

MONDAY, in EASTER WEEK,

April 6th, 1713.

By the Right Reverend Father in God,
WILLIAM Lord Biſhop of *CHESTER*.
Dawes

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SERMON

Preached before the Right Honourable the

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THE

ALDERMEN, SHERIFFS

&c.

A

SERMON

Preach'd on

EASTER-MONDAY.

JOHN XX. Ver. 20.

The Latter Part of the Verſe.

-----Then were the Diſciples glad, when they ſaw the Lord.

IN the words, immediately preceding my Text, we have an account of our Bleſſed Lord's *appearing* to *all* his *Apoſtles*, excepting *Thomas* only, on the *Evening* of the *day* of his Reſurrection: and of his *ſhewing them his hands*, which had been nail'd to the Croſs, *and his ſide*, which had been there pierc'd with a ſpear, in order to convince them, that he was *that very ſame Jeſus*, who had been, three days before, *crucify'd*, V. 19. V. 24. V. 20.

dead and *buried*. And, in my Text it ſelf, we have an account of the *happy effect*, which this appearance of our Lord, thus evidently proving him to be *truly* and *properly* riſen from the dead, had upon theſe his Apoſtles: *they were glad, when they* thus *ſaw the Lord*. Agreeably to what our Lord himſelf had *promis'd* and *foretold*, John 16. 22. *I will ſee you again, and your heart ſhall rejoice, and your joy no one taketh from you.*

And certainly, if ever any men had true ground for joy, the *Apoſtles* had, when they beheld their Dear *Lord* and *Maſter*, on *whom* all their *great expectations* entirely *depended*, with *whom* they had been all *dead* and *buried*, and with *whom* alone it was poſſible for them to *revive*, reſtor'd to life again: and ſaw their *Sun of Righteouſneſs* ariſe, infinitely *more glorious* than it ſet. If ever any thing could raiſe men's ſpirits up into an *extaſy* of joy, undoubtedly *our Saviour's Reſurrection* ought to have had *this* effect upon his *Apoſtles*; who, *without* this, muſt immediately have *fall'n from*, but, *by* this, were *confirm'd* and *eſtabliſh'd in*, the very *greateſt hopes*, that ever *human nature* had been, or that indeed it was poſſible it ever could be, *rais'd* to.

But my deſign is not to conſider our Lord's Reſurrection, with regard to the *Apoſtles* only, but with regard to *all Chriſtians* in general: and, in ſo doing, to ſhew, how much it is for the *benefit* of them *all*, and conſequently how *juſt* and *ample* a ſubject of *joy* it ought always to be to them.

And, in order to this, I muſt beg leave, briefly to lay before you the following conſiderations.

Firſt, that our Saviour's *Reſurrection* is a plain proof that he was no *deceiver* (as he muſt have been own'd to have

have been, if he had not riſen from the dead) but really and truly what he profeſs'd himſelf to be, a *Prophet ſent from God.*

Secondly, that it is an additional proof, to thoſe many other which he had before given, of his being, the *great Prophet* of Prophets, the true *Meſſiah*, or *Saviour* of the world.

Thirdly, that it is an evident demonſtration of the *reconciliation of God*, to the *whole ſinful race of Mankind.* And

Laſtly, that it is an undeniable *Argument* of the *poſſibility*, and an infallible *Pledge* of the *certainty*, of our *own Reſurrection.*

Firſt, That our Saviour's *Reſurrection* is a plain proof, that he was no *deceiver* (as he muſt have been own'd to have been, if he had not riſen from the dead) but really and truly, what he profeſs'd himſelf to be, *a Prophet ſent from God.*

It had been *uſual* with thoſe, who profeſs'd themſelves *Prophets* amongſt the *Jews*, to give ſome *ſign*, to *foretell* ſome *future contingent event*, or to *do* ſome *miraculous work*, in *proof* of their *Divine Miſſion* and *Inſpiration.* Thus *Moſes*, and thus moſt of their *great Prophets*, had done. Exod. 4. And, *agreeably* to this *uſage*, we find the *Jews* frequently asking our Saviour, *What ſign ſheweſt thou? What doſt thou work? that we may ſee, and believe thee.* John 2. 18. 6. 30. And our Saviour's *conſtant anſwer* to them was *one* of theſe *two* things, either, *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three days I will raiſe it up* (now *he ſpake of the Temple of his body*) Matt. 12. 38. or, that there ſhould be *no ſign given* to them, *but the ſign of the Prophet Jonas. For, as Jonas was three* Luke 11. 29.

days

days and three nights in the whale's belly, ſo the Son of man ſhould be, three days and three nights, in the heart of the earth. From which it is plain, that the great *ſign*, which our Bleſſed Lord himſelf *appeal'd* to, in *proof* of his *Divine Authority*, was his *Reſurrection*: and conſequently, if *this* ſign had not *come to paſs*, he muſt have ſtood *ſelf-condemned* for a *Deceiver*.

'Tis true indeed, our Lord had wrought *other miracles* enough, to have been an abundant *proof* of his being a *true Prophet*: but, notwithſtanding all theſe, ſince he, by his own free choice, had been pleas'd to *ſet* himſelf *this farther* proof of it, and to lay the *great ſtreſs* of his *whole* cauſe upon *it*; if he had *fail'd here*, this muſt have been an unanſwerable objection againſt him, and a ſufficient ground, either for calling in *queſtion* the *truth* of his *other* miracles, or for *ſuſpecting* them to have come from God, only by way of *trying* and *proving* his people (as he had declar'd he would ſometimes do, in this manner) whether they *lov'd the Lord their God, with all their heart and with all their Soul*, and would *obey and ſerve him, and cleave unto him* only, and not *hearken unto* falſe Prophets.

Deuter. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And ſo well did the *Jews* remember our Saviour's *frequent appeals* to his *Reſurrection*, as that which ſhould be the *deciſive Teſt* of his *Divine Authority*, ſo perfectly did they underſtand, how very much *depended* upon *this*: that we find them, ſoon after his death and burial, guarding, with the utmoſt caution, againſt a pretended reſurrection of him. As is plain, from the *Chief-Prieſts and Phariſees coming unto Pilate*, and *ſaying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver ſaid, while he was yet alive, After three days I will Riſe again. Command therefore that the ſepulchre be made ſure, until the third day, leſt his diſciples come by night, and ſteal him away, and ſay unto the people*

Matt. 27 62, 63, 64, 65, 66.

people he is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first; as also from *Pilate*'s answer, acknowledging the reasonableness of this their request, *Ye have a watch, go your way, make it as sure as you can*; and lastly, from the immediate care which they took hereupon, to *make the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.*

And ought it not then to be *matter* of unspeakable *joy*, to us Christians, to *consider*, that, when the *Credit* of our *Great Prophet* was all *at stake* upon his *Resurrection*: when *all* those *glorious* things, which he had *promis'd* us in the *name of God*, were *asleep* with *him* in his *grave*, and never could *awake* more but *with him*: when his *enemies* stood ready, at the end of three days, to *insult* over *him* as an *Impostor*, and over *all* his *Disciples*, as the most *miserably deluded Wretches*, that the world had ever seen: and when that *short* space of time was to *determine* a question of the *greatest consequence*, that ever *mankind* was *concerned* in: to *consider*, I say, that at this *Critical* and *Important* juncture, all things did *succeed*, just as we our selves could have *wish'd*. Our Saviour *rose from the dead*, exactly according to his *promise*: his *enemies* were hereby utterly *baffled* and *confounded*; his own *Honour* and *Authority* amply *vindicated*; his *disciples faith* and *hope* in *him reviv'd, strengthen'd, increas'd, establish'd*; and above all, those *exceeding great and precious promises*, which he had made to mankind, *assur'd* to them, beyond a *possibility* of *failing*?

Secondly, Our Saviour's *Resurrection* was an additional proof, to those many others, which he had before given, of his being the *great Prophet* of Prophets, the *Messiah*, or *Saviour* of the world. He, who was to be *receiv'd* by men under *that Character*, was undoubtedly to *fulfill all things, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning the Messiah.* And Luke 24. 44.

ſo much our Bleſſed Lord, of his own accord, had frequently *intimated* to his *Diſciples*. And conſequently, the *Reſurrection* of the *Meſſiah* being plainly both *præ-figur'd* and *foretold* in *Scripture*, it *behov'd* our Saviour, as he himſelf was pleas'd to expreſs it, *to riſe from the dead the third day*: that ſo *this* part of the *Meſſiah*'s Character might be *accompliſh'd* in *him*, as all the *preceding* Parts had been.

Luke 24. 46.

He and the *Types* and *Prophecies* of the *Old Teſtament* had gone all along *hand in hand*, from his very *birth* to his *death* and *burial*. But however, had he *ſtopped here*, and not *gone on* with them to his *Reſurrection* likewiſe, this had been a ſufficient *bar* to, and *confutation* of, *all* his *pretenſions* of being the *Meſſiah*. Nay a ſtop *here* would have been a more *immediate* and *ſenſible* objection to the *Jews*, than in any *other* part of the *Meſſiah*'s *Character*; becauſe it would have been a ſtop, at the very beginning of *that* part of it, which they *chiefly* regarded, and had ſet their hearts upon, viz. the *glorious* and *triumphant* part. And, tho' it is true indeed that the *glories* of our *Saviour's Reſurrection*, and of his ſubſequent *Exaltation*, were of a very *different kind* from *thoſe*, which the *Jews* commonly expected in *their Meſſiah*: and therefore could not probably, at firſt ſight, be eſteem'd by them *ſufficient* to *fill up* the *triumphant* part of the *Meſſiah*'s *Character*, which they ſo much *doated* on; yet, on the other hand it muſt be acknowledg'd, that they could not but be thought, by every *honeſt minded* and *conſidering* Jew, to *bid ſomething* towards *this part* of his *Character*, and therefore were *ſufficient*, to keep ſuch, from *abſolutely rejecting* our Bleſſed Lord, as having *wholely failed* as to *this* part, and to gain an opportunity of *parlying* with them, and convincing them, that they were *miſtaken* in their explication of *thoſe* places of *Scripture*, which related to *this part* of the *Meſſiah*'s *Character*, and that *theſe* were *truly all fulfill'd* in the *Spiritual Glories* of our Lord's *Reſurrection* and ſubſequent

quent *Exaltation*; nay indeed, much more *eminently* and *illustriously*, than they could have been, in those *Temporal glories*, which they *expected*, and so earnestly *long'd for*, in *their Messiah*.

And accordingly we find in fact, that *this way* of *arguing* did *convince* abundance of the *Jews*: St. *Peter* having *converted* no less than *three thousand* by *it*, at one time, proving, that God, by our Lord's *Resurrection* and *Exaltation*, had *made him both Lord and Christ*; and, at another time, having *confounded* all the *Doctors* of the *Jewish Council*, by it, and, in some measure at least, brought over *Gamaliel*, one of the best reputation among them, to be on his side. And this shews how altogether *needless* that *distinction* is, which the *latter Jews* have *invented*, of a *twofold* Messiah, a *suffering* and *a triumphing* one: our Blessed Lord having, as, by his *Passion* and *Death*, made good the *part* of the *former*, so by his *Resurrection* and *Exaltation*, abundantly fulfill'd the *part* of the *latter*. Acts 2. 29, 30, &c. Acts 5. 29, 30, &c.

And what a mighty *enhancement*, of the *Blessing* of our Saviour's *Resurrection*, ought this to be to us, that it not only prov'd him to be a *true Prophet*, and consequently that his *promises* of *Salvation* were to be *depended* upon, but moreover that *he himself* was the *very Person*, who was to be the *Author* and *Procurer* of this *Great Salvation*? Can any thing be a *cause* of *greater joy* to all true Christians, unless it be *this farther* consideration, that our Lord's *Resurrection* is an incontestable *proof*, that he has *actually sav'd us*? As will plainly appear, from my *two remaining* particulars; the *next* of which is

Thirdly, That our Saviour's *Resurrection* is an evident demonstration of the *reconciliation of God*, to the *whole sinful race of mankind*. It was *for our sake*, and *in our stead*, that the *Blessed Jesus* suffer'd *death*: *death*, I say, which *he*, who had *done no sin*, could not possibly have

deſerv'd, on *his own account*, but purely as the *Repreſentative* of the *whole ſinful race of mankind*, who had *all ſinn'd*, and ſo all *deſerv'd* death. And accordingly the Scripture tells us, that he was *deliver'd* to death, *for our*
Rom. 4. 25. *offences*, that he *taſted death for every man*, that he *dy'd*
Heb. 2. 9. *for us*, that he *ſhed his blood for the remiſſion of our ſins*,
1 Theſ 5. 10. Matt. 26. 28. that he was our *ranſom*, *propitiation*, &c. His *death*
1 Tim. 2. 6. then being the *puniſhment* of *our* ſins, there was juſt rea-
1 John 22. ſon to conclude, as *long* as he *continu'd* under this *puniſh-ment*, that God's *wrath* towards *us*, upon account of our *ſins*, was *un-appeas'd*, and conſequently *we* our ſelves *un-*
1 Cor. 15. 17. *pardon'd*. And therefore, St. *Paul* tells us, *If Chriſt be not rais'd, we are yet in our Sins.* If it had been *poſſible*,
Acts 2. 24. as St. *Peter* expreſſeth it, that he ſhould have been *de-tain'd by death*, then muſt we likewiſe have remain'd *ob-noxious* to *that curſe of ſin* ſtill: ſince whatever had been *his* lot, he being *our Repreſentative*, muſt have been *our's* alſo.

Rom. 4. 25. But now is Chriſt *riſen from the dead*, as the ſame Apo-
Acts 2. 24. ſtle ſpeaks, *for our juſtification.* Now hath God *rais'd him*
Rom. 3. 25, 26. *up, having loos'd the pains of death*, to *declare his righte-ouſneſs, or mercy, for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I ſay, at this time his righteouſneſs; that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him,*
Rom. 8. 33. 34. *which believeth in Jeſus. Who* then *ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that juſtifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died*, yea *rather that is riſen again.*

Oh *Glorious!* Oh *Bleſſed Reſurrection*, the *Seal* of the *Pardon* of the Sins of the whole world. What true Chri-ſtian can forbear *breaking out* into *joy*, upon this *triumph-*
1 Pet. 1. 3. *ant* occaſion, and ſaying with *St. Peter? Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who, according to his*

his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Fourthly and Lastly, To *Compleat* and *Crown* our joy, let us consider, that our Saviour's *Resurrection* is an undeniable *Argument* of the *possibility*, and an infallible *Pledge* of the *certainty* of our *own Resurrection.*

In St. *Paul's* time it was very much *disputed*, amongst the *Heathens*, and the most *learned* of them too, whether there *could* be such a thing, as a *true* and *proper resurrection* of the *dead*, or no: And most *commonly* believ'd, that there *could not*; as seems plain, from the *Epicureans* and *Stoicks opposing St. Paul*, and calling him *babbler*, and others looking upon him, as a *setter forth of strange Gods*, and others *mocking* at him, when *he preach'd unto them Jesus and the Resurrection.* Nay, even some of the *Corinthians* themselves, who were become *Converts* to Christianity, seem still to have *retain'd* this *belief*: as is evident, from that Question of St. *Paul* to them, 1 *Cor.* 15. 12. How say some, *among you*, that there is no resurrection from the dead? But now our Lord's actual *Resurrection* utterly *put an end* to this *dispute*: nothing being more certain than that *this*, which had been done in *him*, might be done in every one of *us*, if God should so please. And therefore St. *Paul* contents himself with this *single* Argument, in *proof* of the *possibility* of a Resurrection: *Now, if Christ be preach'd that he rose from the dead, How say some among you*, in contradiction to so plain a matter of fact, *that there is no Resurrection from the dead?* Acts 17. 18, 32.

Nor was our Saviour's *Resurrection* only an undeniable *Argument* of the *Possibility* of *our's*, but an infallible *Pledge* of the *Certainty* of it likewise. For, as he *suffer'd for us*, or as our *Representative*, so, no doubt, he *rose again for us*, or as our *Representative* also: and hence

it

it will follow that, properly ſpeaking, *all mankind* did *virtually* and *potentially Riſe*, in *his* Reſurrection. And this I take to be the meaning of thoſe places of Scripture, which tell us, that *God hath quickned us together with Chriſt, and hath rais'd us up together with him*: and *that Chriſt is our life, and that our life is hid with him.* And *Chriſt* is term'd by St. *Paul the firſt fruits of them that ſlept*, to ſignify to us that he *has*, by *his* Reſurrection, *Sanctify'd* the *whole lump* or *maſs* of mankind, for *their* Reſurrection likewiſe: and that, as it follows in the ſame place, *in Chriſt all ſhall be made alive, every man in his own order.* So that our *Saviour's Reſurrection* is a *proof* of the *certainty* of *our's*, not only as it proves him to be a *true Prophet*, and conſequently that his *promiſe* of our Reſurrection ſhall be *made good* to us, but, as it is it ſelf, in *Right* and *Power*, our *own* Reſurrection; as it is the Reſurrection of the *Repreſentative* of the *whole ſinful race* of mankind, and conſequently of *all them*, in *him.* And this is what ſome Learned men underſtand by the *power of our Lord's Reſurrection*, mention'd by St. *Paul*, Philip. 3. 10. *Viz.* that *his* is *the exemplary cauſe of our Reſurrection*, as *Eſtius* ſpeaks.

Ephes. 2. 4, 5, 6.

Coloſ. 3. 3, 4.

1 Cor. 15. 20, 22, 23.

And what a *noble* and *delightful* proſpect then doth the Reſurrection of our Saviour from the dead *open*, to *all* mankind? even a proſpect of that *immortal life*, which they had *all* ſo much *long'd* for, and deſir'd *above all things.* More eſpecially, what a *delightful* proſpect doth it open, to all *true*, all *good*, Chriſtians? a proſpect of an *immortal life*, in *inconceivable* and *immortal happineſs*: a proſpect of an *inheritance*, *incorruptible*, *undefiled*, *that fadeth not away*, *reſerv'd in Heaven for us.*

To

To what has been said I might further add, that our Saviour's Resurrection is, upon *several other* accounts, a matter of the highest *advantage*, and consequently *joy*, to all Christians. *Viz.*

As it shadows out to them the great *Duty* and *Privilege*, of their own *moral* Resurrection, from a *death in trespasses and sins*, to *a new life in Righteousness and true Holiness*; to which purpose it is *often*, and most *earnestly*, apply'd and urg'd in Scripture. Rom. 6. 11. Ephes. 2. 5, 6. Col. 1. 1, 2, 3.

As it takes away the *offence* of the *Cross*: proving *that* to have been the *meritorious cause* of the *pardon* of the sins of the whole world, and so *turning* all its *Ignominy* into *Glory*.

As it proves our Saviour to be *Lord both of the quick and dead*: demonstrating his *death* to have been *effectual*, for the *Redemption* of *all*: and consequently *all* to be his *purchase* and *peculiar people*. 1 Cor. 6. 20.

As it *open'd* the way to, and was indeed an *ernest* of, *all* that subsequent *Glory*, which God soon after bestow'd on him: his being *invested* with *all power both in Heaven and in Earth*, his *Ascension into Heaven*, his *Session at the Right-hand of God*, his *receiving Gifts for men*, and his having *a name given him above every name*, that, *at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth.* Rom. 1. 4.

As it *fitted* him to become a most *powerful Mediator* for us, enabling him *to save to the uttermost all them, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession* Heb. 7. 24, 25.

terceſſion for them. As the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks.

Acts 17. 31. As it is an *Aſſurance* from *God to all men*, as St. *Paul* tells us, that he has *appointed him to be Judge of the world.* And, above all,

John 2. 19, 21. 5. 21. As it is a *plain evidence* of his being *himſelf* a *Divine Perſon:* it having been the effect of his *own*, and yet not poſſible to be the effect of any but a *Divine*, power.

But theſe, tho' *all* points of the *greateſt* and moſt *comfortable* importance, I muſt content my ſelf, at preſent, with having *barely* mention'd: and haſten to *apply* what has been ſaid, and *that* wholly with regard to the *Charity-part* of the occaſion of our this day's meeting. And

First, is Chriſt's Reſurrection a plain proof, that he was a Prophet, ſent from God? then is it, in its *conſequences*, likewiſe one of the *ſtrongeſt* proofs, which we can poſſibly have, of our *obligations* to the *great Duty* of *Charity*. For never did *any*, of *all* God's Prophets, ſo *perfectly teach*, ſo *aſſiduouſly inculcate*, ſo *powerfully enforce*, our obligations to *this* Duty, as *Chriſt* has done. *Charity* was his *new* and his *great commandment:* it was the very *badge of his Diſcipleſhip:* both his *Doctrine* and his *Life* continually *preach'd* and *explain'd* it: he allow'd no *attainments* in Religion, how *great* ſoever, to be of *any value*, *without* it: he declar'd it to be, the *ſum* and *ſubſtance* of our *whole Duty* to our *Neighbour*, the very *bond of perfectneſs*, the *likelieſt* of *all* Chriſtan Graces, to obtain *whatſoever we ask of God*, and to *aſſure our hearts before him*, in *this* life, and, which is infinitely more, to *ſecure* his *favour* at the *day of Judgment*, and to *fit* us for the *ever-*

John 13. 34. Mark 12. 31. John 13. 35. Acts 10. 38. Mark 10. 21. 1 Cor. 13. Col. 3. 14. 1 John 3. 18, 19, 22, 23. Matt. 25. 34, &c.

everlaſting enjoyment of *him* and *Heaven*, in the *next* life.

In vain then ſhall we acknowledge Chriſt to be a *true Prophet*, unleſs, in obedience to his moſt *expreſs*, moſt *frequent* and moſt *earneſt*, commands, we do, *above all things, put on Charity, bowels of mercies, kindneſs, tender-heartedneſs, goodneſs, readineſs to diſtribute, willingneſs to communicate*: remembring *the words of the Lord Jeſus, how he ſaid, it is more bleſſed to give, than to receive*; and again, *Make to your ſelves friends of the Mammon of unrighteouſneſs; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlaſting habitations.*

Col. 3. 14. 12. Eph. 4 32. Gal. 5. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Acts 20. 35. Luke 16. 9.

Secondly, Is Chriſt's Reſurrection an additional proof, to thoſe many other which he had before given, of his being the Meſſiah? Then do we live in *thoſe days* which, according to the predictions of all the Ancient Prophets, were to be *days* of the moſt *exalted* and *abundant love and good will*, amongſt men. Days, in which every thing, that was *hurtful* and *deſtructive* to mankind, was utterly to *ceaſe*: and every thing, that was *good* and *beneficial* to them, to *ſpring* and *flouriſh*. Days, in which the moſt *rough* and *ſavage* of human nature were to be *transform'd*, into the moſt *mild* and *loving*: and, in one word, Days, in which, not only by the *Meſſiah himſelf* and his *miraculous power*, but by *all his faithful followers* and the *ordinary powers* of Chriſtian Charity, *all manner of infirmities and diſeaſes* were to be *heal'd*. and *all manner of wants*, both *Spiritual* and *Temporal*, were to be *ſupply'd* to men. In which, *the eyes of the blind were to be open'd, the ears of the deaf unſtopp'd, the lame to leap*

Iſa. c. 11. c. 65.

Iſa. c. 42. c. 61.

c. 35. c. 29. 19. Pſal. 22. 26.

as an hart, the tongue of the dumb to ſing, and the priſoners to be brought out of their priſon, both in a *natural* and a *moral* ſenſe: and, in an eſpecial manner, *the poor among men to rejoice*, as well, for having *bread to eat and be ſatisfy'd*, as, for having the *bleſſed tidings of ſalvation preach'd to them*. And conſequently we, who profeſs our ſelves the *Diſciples* of the *Meſſiah*, are bound, both in *Juſtice* to our *Diſcipleſhip*, and in *Honour* to our *Maſter*, to do *our* parts, towards the accompliſhing of theſe *glorious* Predictions. And, perhaps, no one thing has ſo much *hinder'd* the *ſpreading* and *flouriſhing* of the *Meſſiah*'s Religion, as his Diſciples *failing*, of making good *this part* of its Character; which cannot but render it moſt *lovely* and *deſirable*, in the eyes of the whole world.

Thirdly, Is our Saviour's Reſurrection an evident Demonſtration of the Reconciliation of God, to the whole ſinful race of mankind? How pertinently then will St. *John*'s Inference come in here, that, *if God ſo loved us*, 1 John 4. 11. *we ought alſo to love one another*. If he ſo *readily* manifeſted his *acceptance*, of the *propitiation offer'd for our ſins*: If he ſo *ſoon*, within the *ſhort* ſpace of leſs than three whole days, declar'd himſelf *fully ſatisfy'd*, with the *price* tender'd to him, for *our Redemption*: what a noble *pattern* of love has he herein ſet us, to *copy* after? And how *impoſſible* muſt it be for *us*, while we bear *this love* in mind, to *decline* any *Offices of love* to one another: eſpecially, of love to one another's *ſouls*; thoſe *ſouls*, which *he*, who *made* them and beſt *knows the value* of them, has ſhewn ſuch a *tender regard*, and *high concern* and *affection* for? Nay how *impoſſible* muſt it be for us, at *this Holy Seaſon*, when we have been, in the moſt

ſolemn

solemn manner, commemorating *this Infinite love* of God to us, and when therefore our hearts *ought* to be, and I will, for that reason, suppose, *are*, thoroughly *warm'd* with a most *lively sense* of it, not only not to *decline* but, even not *zealously* to *embrace*, not *passionately* to *long for*, not *eagerly* to *seek out* of our selves, *opportunities* of being *merciful* to *others*, as *our Father which is in Heaven* has been *to us*?

Fourthly, Is Christ's Resurrection an undeniable Argument of the possibility, and an infallible pledge of the certainty, of our own Resurrection? Herein then have we the most *powerful Argument* to *love and good works*, that possibly can be. The *hope* of a *future Resurrection*, and, that which it is in order to, a *future Judgment* and *day of Retribution*, has been the *great principle*, that has *animated* and *excited* good men, in all ages of the world, to the most *Heroick* Acts of *Piety* and *Virtue*. But more especially has *this hope* had the most *wonderful* and *glorious* effects upon *Christians*: as having been made much *stronger* in them, by the evidence of our Lord's *Resurrection*, and the *promises* of his Gospel, than it had ever been in those of *other* Religions. And particularly has this hope *rais'd* the minds of Christians *above the love of earthly things*, and made them most *willing* and *desirous* to *exchange* them, by works of *Charity* and *Mercy*, into *Heavenly Things*. Thus, you see, how readily the *first Christians* made *all* their worldly goods *common*, and *sold* Acts 2. 44. 45.
their possessions, and parted them to all men, as every man had need; nay and even *did not count their lives dear unto* Acts 20. 24.
themselves, but *most gladly spent and were spent*, in the *ser-* 2 Cor. 12. 15.
vice of one another, especially the service of one ano-

ther's *ſouls*: becauſe they knew aſſuredly, that this their *labour of love*, ſhould not be *in vain in the Lord*; they had their *Saviour*'s own word for it, that it ſhould *be recompenſed at the Reſurrection of the Juſt*, and that, at the *great day of Judgment*, he himſelf would *remember* it, and *produce it in their favour*, and *reward it* with a *Kingdom*, *prepar'd for them*, *from the foundation of the world.*

Luke 14. 14. Matt. 25.

Laſtly, Is Chriſt's Reſurrection, upon many accounts, a matter of the greateſt and moſt abundant joy to us Chriſtians? How *naturally* then will this joy *enlarge* our *hearts*, and *ſet wide open* our *hands*, to our *poor* and *diſtreſſed* Brethren? It is the nature of *all* joy to make men, to ſome degree or other, *open-hearted* and *bountiful*: nay, even the moſt *covetous* and *unmerciful* are not *wholly* ſecure againſt *this effect* of joy. And accordingly we find in fact, that we always apply to our Brethren with *beſt ſucceſs* for *bounties*, when they are in a *pleas'd* and *joyful* temper of mind: and that the moſt *hard-hearted and cloſe-fiſted* men living are, by ſome *extraordinary* occaſions of joy, *tranſported*, beyond themſelves, into *exceſſive* Acts of *Munificence* and *Liberality*. And, if ſo, if this is the *common effect* of *all* joy; of all *ſorts* and all *degrees* of it; nay, if even *worldly* joy has ſometimes *this* effect, upon the moſt *obdurate* mind, and *griping* hand; What *effects of this kind* may we not reaſonably *expect* from *joy* like *that* of this *Holy Seaſon*? from *Joy Spiritual*, from the very *higheſt degree* of this joy, which we are capable of in this life: and upon *hearts* ſo *tender*, and *hands* ſo *liberal* as *thoſe* of *Chriſtians* ought *always to be*, and as thoſe of Chriſtians *affected with*, and *govern'd by* a due ſenſe of the *bleſſings* of our Lord's Reſurrection, *always will be*? If the *joy* of a

pardon

pardon from an Earthly Prince, of a *Temporary Inheritance* is ſo apt to make our hearts *overflow* with *Love* and *Beneficence* towards men. What will not the *joy of a pardon from God himſelf*, of an *Eternal Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven*, be *able* to *work our hearts up to?* Oh! how ought *the abundance of our joy*, as St. *Paul* expreſſeth it, *to abound unto the Riches of our Liberality?* How *vaſt* will *that Charity* be, which ſhall *ſtretch it ſelf out*, as far as it is *able*, in *proportion* to the *Bleſſings* of our Saviour's *Reſurrection?* 2 Cor. 8, 2.

Here a True Report was Read.

And, behold, how much *needed* ſuch an *abundant* and *extenſive* Charity is at preſent: when, as appears *by* the *Report* juſt now read, ſo many *worthy Objects* do, to ſo *great* a degree, want its Aſſiſtance? *Objects*, which, having formerly deſcrib'd at large, I ſhall now ſay no more of, than that our Bleſſed *Lord* himſelf has *recommended* them to our care; and that the *Diſpenſations* of Divine Providence now *force* them, with a more than *ordinary* earneſtneſs, to *ask* it, that they are both in *themſelves*, and in their *Circumſtances*, the *moſt moving* and *inviting*: and that they will richly *repay* in *honour* to *God*, our *Bleſſed Saviour* and our *Holy Religion*, (not to *ſtoop* to any *worldly* conſiderations at preſent) all thoſe *good Offices*, which we ſhall do for them. *Sermon on* Eaſter-Monday, April 25th. 1709.

And oh! who then, that profeſſeth himſelf a *Chriſtian*, and conſequently owns himſelf bound to *do good*, *as he has opportunity*, muſt not, at this *bleſſed* time, and upon this *glorious* occaſion, feel himſelf *glowing* and *burning* within, Gal. 6. 10.

within, with the moſt *fervent* and *intenſe* love, towards his Brethren? Who, that has any *tolerable* ſenſe of the *abundant mercy* of *God* to *him* in *raiſing up Chriſt from the dead*, can poſſibly want *any degree* of *mercy*, towards *thoſe* of his *own kind*? Who, that has any *bowels of compaſſion* at all, can forbear *ſetting them wide open*, to receive thoſe *needy objects* of it, now before us? I hope there is not *one* here, who is not *thus* affected and diſpos'd: but if there be, I think it my indiſpenſable Duty to tell him,

1 John 3. 17. that *the love of God dwelleth not in him*, and that, he is not, in the *beſt* ſenſe, *riſen with Chriſt*: intitled to that *happy Reſurrection of the Juſt*, of which no *unmerciful* man ſhall be *counted worthy*: but, on the contrary, *riſen* only to a *Reſurrection of condemnation*, *to a Reſurrection* of

James 2. 13. *Judgment without mercy*, foraſmuch as, under theſe *ſtrongeſt* obligations, to theſe moſt *inviting* objects, they would *ſhew no mercy*.

To ſay all at once, If we deſire to be the *better*, nay, not *Infinitely* the *worſe*, for our Lord's *Reſurrection*: let

Coloſ. 3. us learn from it to *ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God*: to *ſet our affections*

Heb. 10. 34. *on things in Heaven, and not on things on the earth*: and *ſincerely* and *earneſtly* to *love* one another, and even *joyfully* to *ſpoil* our ſelves of our worldly *goods*, for the ſake of one another, and in hopes of *this better Reſurrection*: and then *God will dwell in us*, and *his love will be perfected*

1 John 4. 12. *in us*: then *when Chriſt, who is our life ſhall appear, we alſo ſhall appear with him in Glory.*

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